

until she reaches puberty, the prospective husband assumes the responsibility of providing food for her and her parents. A younger man may obtain a wife by giving several years' bride service in the household of the girl's parents. 584

Death and burial.—An "executioner"¹ was pointed out to Martins, 888 whose duty it was to despatch the fatally ill and the senile. Attribution 734 of this custom to the Mundurucu is said to be widespread among neighboring tribes.

When a death occurs, the maternal² relatives of the deceased cut their hair, blacken their faces, and conduct a prolonged wailing for the dead. 764 The corpse, wrapped in a hammock, is placed upright with flexed knees in a cylindrical grave under the floor of the dwelling. Grave goods consist of ornaments and other small objects. Skeletons of men of high status are exhumed and burned after the flesh has decayed; the ashes are buried in jars.

When a warrior is killed on a distant battlefield, his head is taken 766 back to the village and put on display with his ornaments, trumpet, and weapons. After a feast in honor of the deceased, the head is suspended from the neck of his mother, widow, or sister, and his fellow warriors pledge to avenge his death. During this ceremony the shaman is isolated in a special hut where he blows the sacred trumpet (*indulif*). The ceremony is repeated at yearly intervals, terminating with the fourth performance, when the head is finally buried in the house of the deceased.

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

At the beginning of winter, the Mundurucu perform a ceremony which 796 on alternate years invokes success in hunting and in fishing. The shaman, 798 isolated in a special hut, propitiates the guardian spirits of game animals and fish. A ventriloquistic dialogue in which the voices of the animals are heard proceeding from the hut informs the people of the shaman's success in obtaining the favor of the spirits. Offerings are made to the skulls of animals and fish. The ceremony is directed by a feast leader who is both a prominent warrior and a good singer. Tucatu (1877) reports a similar annual ceremony to propitiate the spirits of maize and manioc.

Farabee (1917 a) describes a feast held at the first full moon in May 796 to celebrate the first hunt following the birth of the April lings of 535 peccaries. After a feast in which young peccaries are eaten, there is a dance in which the performers imitate a herd of peccaries. Children 824 run among the dancers like young peccaries while the older people imitate the sound of peccaries feeding; a dancer representing an old bear protecting the herd wrestles with another dancer who plays the part of a jaguar. The bear succeeds in holding off the jaguar while the herd of peccaries escapes.

¹ [Martins (source 2) says this was done by the children -- Analyst.]
² [Martins says female rather than maternal-Analy.]

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The most common affliction of the supernatural was caushi. The caushi was not a spirit but an object carved to a certain form by a carver, given malignant animation by him, and sent sometimes against certain people, but usually against anyone that it might encounter. All illness was caused by caushi and, therefore, ultimately by witchcraft.

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756 Shamanism

The chief function of the Mundurucu shaman was curing. Among his other duties was the ceremonial one of guarding the people against the attacks of Yurupari during certain rites. He was also responsible for putting in a deep sleep by a magical spell the people of a village about to be attacked and for feeding the spirit "mother" of the game.

The power of shamanism was hereditary in the patrilineal line and present since birth. All the children of a shaman, including daughters, possessed the power, but, today, the women do not practice any more. In the aboriginal culture, female shamans had only a few specific ceremonial functions and did not cure. Curing was done by the common practice of blowing smoke on the sick person and then extracting the evil object, or caushi, by massage and suction. The shaman then prescribed certain herbs and roots applied externally or drunk mixed with water that were supposed to heal the internal damage done by the evil object. During the cure, the shaman smoked a large cigarette to generate the necessary curative smoke, but he did not inhale in large enough quantities to produce tobacco narcosis as do the

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754 Tenatchare and Tapirapé shamans.⁴⁴ This was done only when
 [276] the shaman "traveled" to find the "mother of the game" in
 order to feed her. The shaman performed his services free
 of charge and was in no way liberated from the work of the
 men. He enjoyed prestige due to his position as a curer and
 also due to fear of him as a potential sorcerer.

754 Only the shaman had the sorcerer's power. Others
 could learn the effective techniques, but they were not able
 to launch the evil object into the air or endow it with its
 malignant force. He was also capable of turning himself into
 a jaguar and creating other jaguars that he sent against
 people. The penalty for sorcery was death. This severity
 is explained by the Mundurucú, who say, "If we had no sorcerers
 there would be no sickness and people would not die so fast.
 So we have to kill them." At present, only men practice
 sorcery and are recognized as being shamans and only men
 are killed as sorcerers, but Tocantins mentions three cases
 of women accused of witchcraft in the latter part of the
 nineteenth century.⁴⁵

[755] All sickness and death were believed to be caused
 by sorcery, but it was only when a few people died that a
 powerful shaman was asked to detect the sorcerer. Only
 another shaman could do this because "the shaman is able to
 see everything." The shaman might not immediately tell the

44. Wagley, 1948.

45. Tocantins, 1877, pp. 109-111.

the equipment of the men, except for their arms, then leaving the males unencumbered for hunting and fighting. They also cooked, fetched water and firewood and performed other female services. Contrary to Spix and von Martius' (1831:1313) assertion that the women helped on the battlefield, informants said that the women were always left at a safe distance from the scene of combat. The men then proceeded to encircle the enemy village under cover of darkness.

No warfare rituals were held prior to the departure of the expedition, but the most powerful shaman available always accompanied the war party and throughout the course of march was able to ascertain events in the enemy village by sending one of his instruments abroad to spy upon the foe. Once the village had been encircled, the shaman blew ant-eater hair or macaw feathers in the direction of the houses in order to put the enemy into a deep sleep. Eagle feathers were similarly directed at the village in the belief that this would cause the defenders to become confused and impotent in the face of attack.

When the occupants of the village were benumbed, the warriors waited for the cry of a species of bird that breaks into song at dawn. When this signal was heard, the chiefs sounded blasts on their horns and cried the order to attack. Incendiary arrows, made by affixing dried cane-cane to the end of the arrow shaft, were ignited and loosed at the thatch roofs of the houses. The Mundarucu then broke from cover and dashed into the clearing of the enemy village, emitting wild shouts calculated to terrify the people. Adult males and females were killed and decapitated, and prepubescent children of both sexes were captured by the attackers. The Mundarucu then beat a hasty retreat before the enemy could reorganize his forces and summon additional support.

The retreating Mundarucu here drove its captive children ahead hurriedly and stopped at the temporary shelter only long enough to pick up the women and supplies. They then made a day and night forced march until they had reached a safe distance from the enemy. At this point, the expedition turned toward home or, frequently, to new fields of conquest.

A central object of the raid was the taking of enemy heads, and a strict protocol was observed in the preparation of the trophies. After killing an enemy man or woman, the warrior quickly decapitated the corpse. The spine was severed at the lumbar region, but the skin was cut around the chest, shoulders, and back to leave a substantial flap below the point of severance. The excess skin compensated for the inevitable shrinkage that accompanied desiccation. A piece of wood was then thrust into the mouth of the trophy to prevent its locking closed in rigid mortis. During the return march the head was preserved by removing the brains, boiling it, and then drying it over a fire.

The war party broke up after reaching Mundarucu country, and the participants proceeded to their respective villages. Signals were sounded on horns at short distance outside the villages, and two messengers were sent to inform the people of the results of the raid. The boys of the community went to meet the waiting warriors and received the trophy heads from them. They ran

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776 precipitated to maintain the well-being of the community. Moreover, great care
224 must be taken to avoid giving offense to these spirits lest they strike back at
the offender. The major Mandarucu ceremonies functioned mainly to secure the
benevolence of the spirit mothers, and one of the chief duties of the shaman was
to make periodic offerings to them and thus insure their cooperation.

562 This preoccupation with animal spirits reflects certain basic facts about
224 Mandarucu culture. The society is male-oriented; women are by no means passive
actors in the social structure, but the major foci of the culture were male values
and activities. And to the Mandarucu men, at least those of the remaining
savannah villages, few activities are more important than the hunt. The male
self image is that of the warrior and hunter, the wayfarer of the forests,* and
the Mandarucu are intensely concerned with all things animal. Hunting was
as important as horticulture in the traditional subsistence economy and may well
have been more basic to the diet in earlier times. There is some speculation about
a more authentic origin of the Mandarucu,[†] which suggests the corollary
hypothesis that horticulture was less important in their former habitat. If this
were true, it would help to explain why hunting is so heavily emphasized in
Mandarucu religion, and horticulture is almost completely secularized.

776 The mother of the game, or *patuka ñ*,[‡] protects the animal kingdom as a whole
224 from human offense. The relation between the *patuka ñ* and animals is conceived
by the Mandarucu to be a mother-child relationship. It is believed to be a single,
unitary spirit, but it can be found in several places and under several guises
at one and the same time. Expressed differently, the *patuka ñ* is a single power
having several manifestations.

The mother of the game is not an anthropomorphic personage; it has no form
nor does it exist as a mobile and independent entity. Characteristically, the *patuka ñ*
is found in two forms; in one it is a very special stone called a *worobed*, and
in the other it travels in the bodies of the land tortoise and the coat monkey.
The Mandarucu *worobed* concept, as many of their beliefs, is not highly con-
ceptualized or rigidly formalized. It is vaguely conceived as a power and is
described as a stone-like object visible only to shamans. Thus, the mother of the
game and the *worobed* are not identical, but the spirit does manifest itself in
the latter object. In its *worobed* guise, the *patuka ñ* is usually found in the deep
perennial springs at the headwaters of the streams that issue from the hills
of the Mandarucu country. Hunting is invariably good in these locales because
of the desire of the game to congregate about their mother, and Mandarucu
shamans have techniques whereby they can place the *patuka ñ* in springs near
their villages. So placed, the *patuka ñ* will remain indefinitely unless driven by
a shaman of another village. When the *patuka ñ* is moved by a shaman, it emits

* See the north of Formosa on pp. 187-201 for the expression of this theme in legendary form.
† Cf. Wright, 1967, p. 108 and Gribben, 1962, p. 1.

‡ Mandarucu words are italicized throughout the text. The system of phonetic transcription
and a complete glossary of all Mandarucu terms used may be found in Appendix A. Portuguese
words are not italicized, but Appendix B contains the translations of all terms mentioned and
the taxonomic classifications of most flora and fauna for which Portuguese designations have
been given.

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a thunderous noise, audible only to the animals, and they follow it to its new home.

The manifestation of the mother of the game in coat monkeys and land tortoises is recognized by the Mundurucu to be a temporary, and thus somewhat ephemeral, state. Only certain of these animals harbor the *patoko* *h*, and they can be recognized only by a shaman. It is very important that they be identified as the carriers of the *patoko* *h*, for if an unwary hunter kills one, he is subject to the vengeance of the spirit. Land tortoises bearing the *patoko* *h* are occasionally caught by shamans and kept in secret places near the villages, where they are fed a drink made from sweet manioc and washed with water into which curatiba essence has been rubbed. The food and the delicate scent of the latter wine are gratifying to the *patoko* *h*, and good hunting is thereby assured in the area.

There are other shamanistic techniques for pleasing the mother of the game and thus insuring an abundant game supply, and the major Mundurucu ceremonies are also dedicated to that end. But the *patoko* *h* is a source of danger when offended, and the Mundurucu hunter must observe a strict etiquette toward game animals lest he attract the wrath of their mother. There are several ways of incurring the vengeance of the *patoko* *h*. Killing and eating any game animal except one in which a *patoko* *h* or the spirit mother of the particular species is traveling is considered to be perfectly legitimate. However, the animal must be killed primarily for its meat. The *patoko* *h* becomes offended when a hunter kills any animal except the jaguar and leaves its carcass to rot, or when an animal is killed only for its hide. One may take the hide from an animal—and the Mundurucu sell hundreds of pécary hides every year to traders—but the meat of the animal must be eaten. Beyond this conservation measure it is considered reprehensible to make a joke about, or make vulgar use of, any part of an animal that has been killed, for one must observe a certain decorum and respect toward game. The apparatus and ritual acts that formed parts of the great ceremonies held for the spirit mothers are considered sacred and their use or performance on profane occasions would be most dangerous. It was for this reason that I was unable to induce the Mundurucu to enact any part of these ceremonies no longer practiced, although they were willing to describe them in detail. Finally, the sweet manioc drink offered to the *patoko* *h* in ceremonial occasions must be ritually pure. If it was prepared by a woman who had recently had intercourse or who was menstruating at the time, the *patoko* *h* would become extremely angry.

The *patoko* *h* punishes humans by inflicting accidents upon them and by robbing their souls. Unavoidable, cuts, falls, and all other accidental injuries are looked upon as the vengeance of the *patoko* *h*, and the shaman must be called to ascertain the reason for the attack. Moreover, subsequent to the accident, the *patoko* *h* directs a malignant object into the body of the injured person, causing him to sicken and in some cases die. The shamans consider these among their most difficult cases, for as soon as they successfully extract one malignant object, the *patoko* *h* sends another.

Spirits of the Underworld

776 The *Isokariak* are a class of spirits that are believed to inhabit the underworld. Although they are extremely mischievous, the *Isokariak* are not specifically malevolent toward humans nor are they especially feared by the Mandaruci. During the old Mandaruci wars, *Isokariak* warriors used to issue from the underworld and, unseen by all but the shamans, fought side by side with the Mandaruci as allies. One informant stated that the *Isokariak* were really the souls of Mandaruci warriors of ancient times, but this is not a universally held belief and must be classed with our previously discussed minor variations on major themes. Despite the help given them by their invisible allies, the Mandaruci warriors had to take certain precautions against the *Isokariak*, for the latter always attempted to steal the teeth from the trophy heads taken by the war party. The Mandaruci guarded against this by extracting the teeth, which were later strung on a cotton belt, and hiding them in the mouth of the head. When all the teeth were extracted, they were placed in a small box which the warriors suspended from their necks.

[342] The *Isokariak* were also able to make women pregnant without their knowledge by assuming the form of a small bird and flying between their legs. They later returned to claim the issue. Several cases were reported in which the *Isokariak* seduced the mothers of these surreptitiously begotten children. One child of the village of Parawarikila was sent by her mother to fetch water. After a considerable period of time passed by, the mother asked some women who were bound for the stream to tell the daughter to return immediately. The women went to the stream and found two sets of tracks leading away from the beach. They called the men of the village, who followed the tracks to a hill within which was situated one of the underworld homes of the *Isokariak*. A shaman called out to the girl and asked her to return, but the *Isokariak* replied in a voice heard only by the shaman, "She cannot return. I am keeping her for she is my daughter." The shaman was afraid to make any further attempt to regain the child, and she was left with the *Isokariak*.

776 Informants were able to name three separate underworlds of the *Isokariak*. The one to which that child was taken was known as *Paradisi*. Another was called 772 *Wihatchungpi* and was on the banks of the *Iruvi* River, a tributary of the Cururi River. The third home of the *Isokariak* was *Ekuwawaka* (literally, the place of the *Isokariak*), which was near the *Muro de Caraca* on the Cururi River. All these places were abandoned by the *Isokariak* after they became increasingly subjected to attacks by the *Toropari*. They now live in an underworld to the east and no longer have relations with the Mandaruci.

776 The Mandaruci know of the lands of the *Isokariak* because many shamans are said to have traveled there. Some shamans, as *Pilubahel*, a former chief of *Cepikyl*, even had wives there. The *Isokariak* have human forms when in their own land, but everything else is the reverse of the terrestrial world. *Pilubahel*, for example, related that the first time he had intercourse with his *Isokariak* wife he told her to lie on her back on the ground in the usual Mandaruci position. But the *Isokariak*

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and do not have sexual relations in the same position as do the Mandaracá, and his wife replied, "If I lie on the ground I will get worms. We will do it standing up, instead." Furthermore, although the sun also rises in the east and sets in the west in the underworld, it is night there when it is day in the terrestrial world. The *Isokiricó* engage in fish-dragging expeditions, as do the Mandaracá, but they poison the water with the *dipl* snake and not with *timbi*. Also, they fish for *amanda* rather than real fish. Fish-dragging expeditions are always noisy affairs, but those of the *Isokiricó* are so tempestuous that they create a huge wind which is felt in the terrestrial world as the two- or three-day cold spell which strikes the Mandaracá country in June of every year. Conversely, Mandaracá *timbi*-fishing causes a cold spell in the underworld. (52)

MOTHERS OF THE RAIN

The *mandatá* *is*, or mothers of the rain, are a number of spirits, each of which is believed responsible for a certain type of rain or storm. The Mandaracá believe that the rains are their children and that atmospheric disturbances are the results of their activities. Informants were not certain exactly how many mothers of the rain exist, but they were able to give the names of seven and to describe some of their attributes. The *mandatá* *is* are colored in varying degrees of black or white, and all their possessions, such as carrying baskets and penis sheaths, are correspondingly black or white. All the *mandatá* *is* described by informants are male, but these male spirits have wives who are also considered mothers of the rain. Three of the *mandatá* *is* are mentioned by name in the legend of *Perimut*. They are *Tigahitum* (storm of wind and rain), *Isapungung* (strong thunder and lightning), and *Kirchiracayun* (steady, slow rain). *Kirchiracayun* was also mentioned by informants as the bringer of a fine, all-day rain and as being of whitish color. Of somewhat darker hue is *Chururimupí*, who appears on those days when clouds gather and thunder rumbles. The storm never breaks, however, and the sun always reappears. *Dakiruwá* causes rain and high winds, but, although black, he is not as black as *Dakiruwá*, who brings storms with black clouds. Finally, *Kariparabí*, also a black *mandatá* *is*, carries strong electrical storms with violent thunder and lightning. The thunder is believed to be the sound of his fatten, and the rays of lightning are thought by the Mandaracá to shoot from his ears. *Kariparabí*'s violent behavior is attributed to his anger because of the intimacy of his wife and *Chururimupí*.

The *mandatá* *is* live in houses below the ground; these houses are scattered throughout the world and their occupants determine the weather in their environs. One house of the *mandatá* *is* is inside a hill near the Cahimá River, and its residents make the weather in the surrounding Mandaracá country. During the summer dry season, the *mandatá* *is* wander afar, as do the Mandaracá, and do not return until the beginning of the rains. The people are able to detect the return of the spirits to their homes by the first rumbling of thunder in September.

* *Tucumán* (1977, p. 136) statement that the gods of Mandaracá land are believed to produce storms was corroborated by informants.

** See page 20.

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part of its trip, the soul travels with the coat monkey. This animal traverses one section of its passage by bending an acai palm over, grabbing its branches, and then letting it fling him into the foliage of another tree as it springs back. If the soul is not careful, it falls to the ground, killing its sick owner. The only dangerous part of the journey with various species of fish, except for the invariably fatal end of the trip, is with the black piranha, which tries to eat the soul.

The concept of soul loss, like the belief in spirit mothers of game animals with which it is associated, is widespread among both Indian and rural Brazilian inhabitants of the Amazon region. Especially interesting because of its similarity to the Mundurucu belief is Wagley's report that the Brazilian population of the community of Ita believes that the *malé de bicho* punishes humans by stealing their "shadows."

Although the departure of the soul from a living body is generally an occasion of great danger, there are some circumstances under which it is considered desirable and beneficial. The souls of shamans frequently travel abroad and are able to visit the underworlds of the *kukurú* and the afterworlds of the Mundurucu. Shamans visit the afterworld of the game, (where they serve as shamans to the animals), and that of the *trunguê*, but they do not visit the Land of the *Teropê*. The wounded warrior was believed to acquire temporary shamanistic powers during the period of his incapacity, and his soul wandered abroad while he lay in his hammock and dreamed of its experiences. These travels were considered desirable, and care was taken to remove the penis sheath of the warrior to allow him to dream. The Mundurucu were unable to explain why the penis sheath inhibited dreams and the wandering of the soul.

The souls of sleeping people sometimes travel harmlessly abroad, and dreams are believed to be the experiences of the soul while away from the body. Dreams are not considered visions or prognostications of future events, but they are thought to be good or bad omens. Thus, if a man dreams of some frightening experience, he will not leave the village for a few days for fear of some unknown danger.

Certain people are able to derive knowledge from their dreams. These people, known as *chavetabichangues* (those who know how to explain dreams), derive their power through medication administered to them as children. The souls of Mundurucu of times long past appear to them in dreams and teach them certain songs that are sung during ceremonies. Significantly, the songs taught to dreamers are not new or forgotten ones, but songs that are quite actively present in Mundurucu culture and known by other dreamers.

All animals have souls, which return to the afterworld of the game and become transformed into people upon the death of the animal. Fish are also thought to have souls, but they are considered little importance in Mundurucu thought. Although individual fish and animals have souls, only species of domesticated plants have souls. Dogs, too, are thought to have souls, but the soul returns to the Land of the Dogs upon the death of its body. Also, dogs are not considered to be

III. SHAMANISM AND SORCERY

THE CAUSES of illness, accident, and death are commonly conceived in supernatural terms by primitive peoples, and the techniques for their resolution are accordingly the province of religious practitioners. The supernatural dangers threatening the Mundurucú currently preoccupy the society more than any other aspect of the supernatural realm, for they constitute the cause of all sickness and death; and epidemic disease has beset the Mundurucú since their first contact with Europeans. But the Mundurucú do not feel broken and powerless before the onslaughts of ailments to which they have little natural immunity. Mystical in nature though the evil may be, it is not mysterious, for it can be explained and controlled. The threat is no less concrete for existing on a level of reality beyond the sensory powers of ordinary mortals, but the protection of the society must, therefore, rest in the hands of persons who are able to see and act in this sphere. These individuals are viewed by the Mundurucú as the possessors of great and manifestly beneficial power, although they recognize the corollary principle that this power is potentially dangerous and corrupting. 753

THE SHAMAN

The Mundurucú shaman, or *wowé*, has the ability to deal with supernatural threats through possession of a mystical power latent within him from the time of his birth. His functions within the society are manifold. The shaman performs cures; he is essential to nearly all ceremonies; he propitiates the spirit mothers of the animal world; he rids the community of evil forces; and he can detect lost people and objects. But through essential to the well-being of society, the power of the shaman can be used for evil ends. His status is ambivalent; he maintains a balanced and favorable relation between the human and supernatural worlds, and he is capable of profoundly disturbing this balance. 756 ●

Most Mundurucú villages have at least one shaman in residence, although some have none. The shaman has high prestige, although the respect accorded an individual practitioner is at times mixed with fear when it is suspected that he indulges in black magic. In spite of the high regard in which he is held, he receives no material benefits for his services. Among the more acculturated Mundurucú, a small present is sometimes given to the shaman for a cure, but this pattern appears to be of recent origin and obtains in only a minority of cases. The shaman does not devote full time to his specialty. All practitioners hunt, fish, and clear gardens with the other men and manufacture baskets, bows, and other objects. [554]

The shaman frequently makes great personal sacrifices in the performance of his duties. Some travel great distances to treat those who are too ill to come to them, and they often make these trips to the detriment of other activities and tasks. The practice is considered dangerous, for the shaman must face the dual menace of contact with hostile spirits and the suspicion of his fellowmen. But most Mundurucú shamans are motivated by a true sense of public service. They feel that they possess a great power that can be used both for good and bad ends and be- [465]

756 lieve that it is incumbent upon them to help the sick and to perform their obligations to the supernatural world.

756 One does not seek to become a shaman among the Mundurucú, nor is shamanism
428 the result of a serious illness or an extraordinary experience, as is true in many
562 societies. The power is acquired only through inheritance from the father, and it is believed that all children of shamans are also shamans, although they may not practice the art in later life. For all practical purposes, however, only male children inherit shamanistic power. The female offspring of shamans are nominally classified as shamans also, and women evidently participated more fully in the practice until a relatively recent period, for Tocantins reports a number of women to have been accused of sorcery, knowledge of which is confined to shamans, in and about the year 1875.¹ Today, active status is limited to men, and the daughters of shamans are considered to be shamans in an academic sense only.

756 Mundurucú informants were unable to explain the shaman's power beyond saying that it is within him and that he is born with it. It is not thought of in concrete terms, as a supernatural object lodged within his body, nor is the power thought to reside in supernaturals whom the shaman controls. The absence of any concept of control or of coöperation with certain spirits is rather unusual in this section of South America. Métraux, for example, reports the trait for the Tupinamba,² and Wagley has written of the use of familiar spirits among both the Tapirapé³ and the Tenetehara.⁴ In the regions to the south of the Mundurucú, Oberg states that shamans are aided by spirits among the Kamayurá, Bacairi, and Nambicuara.⁵ Investigation failed to indicate, however, that the Mundurucú shaman was aided in any way by supernatural beings. He is in contact with the supernatural world and is capable of coöperating with it or defeating its intents, but he accomplishes this through direct use of the unlocalized power contained within him and not through the intermediary of spirits. Also, all shamans have some form of contact with all supernatural beings; none has special relations with any particular supernatural.

[388] Some shamans are thought to be more powerful than others. The most effective practitioners are usually the older men, for they are considered to have acquired experience and skill. However, the crucial determinant of a shaman's strength is the strength of his father, for the sons are believed to inherit the degree of power of the parent. Some older Mundurucú men barely practiced, since their power was considered slight, whereas younger men were often highly regarded as shamans. Among the contemporary Mundurucú, two or three shamans are looked upon as being in possession of great strength, and their services are in heavy demand. On one occasion, a man became violently ill shortly after midnight and needed immediate care. The village shaman was away, so it was necessary for one of the sick man's relatives to set out through the forest, which is feared at night, on the path to the next village. He directed its shaman to the aid of his sick rela-

¹ Tocantins, 1877, pp. 109-111.

² Métraux, 1945, p. 129.

³ Wagley, 1943.

⁴ Wagley and Galvão, 1949, pp. 106 ff.

⁵ Oberg, 1953, pp. 60, 73, 100.

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tive and immediately continued on a long journey to another village, where lived a greatly renowned practitioner. Both returned the next day, and the visiting shaman, after administering to the sick man, was visited by everybody in the village who had the slightest ache or pain. He proceeded to rid the village of the various evil spirits believed to be infesting it and returned home. The most renowned shaman among all the Mundurucú lives on the Cururú River. People are known to make overland trips of four days in order to seek his aid. It will be seen that these great shamans are of particular importance in that they are called upon to detect sorcerers.

The training of the shaman is not very complex or extensive. So far as his effectiveness depends on innate power, he need learn no involved techniques for the control of personal spirits. Curing methods are relatively simple, and the mechanics of the procedure are known to any Mundurucú child through mere observation. But the techniques used to propitiate the spirit mothers of the game necessitate some training, which is usually provided by the father or paternal uncle of the novice. The older kinsman also instructs the trainee in the use of various medicinal cures and teaches him the more esoteric aspects of his profession. The novice usually makes his debut as a shaman during one of the ceremonies for the spirit mothers of the animals, when his first official act is to call the mother of the game. This event takes place at about the age of puberty, but he generally does not practice curing until he reaches maturity.

The shaman employs a minimum of apparatus and techniques. Among the Mundurucú, he does not practice ventriloquism nor does he use any musical instruments or songs. In common with shamans in most eastern South American groups, a great deal of his effectiveness depends upon the magical use of tobacco smoke. But there is only one shamanistic activity, that of feeding the spirit mother of the game, in which he seeks a narcotic state through the use of tobacco smoke. Unlike the Tenetehara or Tapirapé shaman,^{*} he does not fall into a trance during a curing performance. The Mundurucú cannot give a clear explanation of the efficacy of tobacco smoke; they say only that it is strong. But smoke is strong only when blown by a shaman, and the strength of the smoke is believed to stem from his power.

Only five instruments are essential to shamanistic practice. The most important of these is the *nanek*, a small piece of the root of the genipa tree carved to resemble a two-headed pestle. The *nanek* is used whenever the shaman feeds the mother of the game. It is believed to emit a thunderous noise audible only to the game, which calls together the animals of a wide area. Another instrument used by the shaman is the *ibōbōt* (literally, 'toy'), a small piece of arrow shaft that is sent out by him in search of lost people and objects. The *borombō* is an instrument, made of tucumá-palm-fruit pits, which leads the shaman to the *putcha* *ji* or mother of the game. The *pōtponchap* is a piece of wood some five inches long, carved in the shape of a knife with a round handle. This instrument is used to kill the intrusive objects sent by sorcerers. Finally, a tail feather of the *mutum*

^{*} Cf. Wagley, 1942.

756 is used by the shaman to extract from afflicted people the *psikip*, or malignant object sent by the mother of the game. All these instruments are inert until the shaman blows power-giving tobacco smoke upon them. They are then thought to be "alive" and to have "strength."

DISEASE AND ITS TREATMENT

757 In order to understand fully the important role that the shaman plays among the Mundurucu, their theories of disease and affliction must be outlined. There is practically no human misfortune that cannot be attributed to supernatural influences. If a Mundurucu suffers a slight cut on his foot, he may admit that it was due to sheer mischance. But if he incurs a serious wound, the shaman is usually consulted and invariably attributes the affliction to the vengeance of the mother of the game. Any infection, pain, or other aftereffect of the wound is generally thought to be the work of the *psikip*, which is sent by the mother of the game or by the soul of the animal offended by the wounded man. Similarly, a snake bite, a fall from a tree, or any other serious misadventure that cannot be classified as a disease is usually diagnosed by the shaman as the vengeance of the animal world.

Diseases also are the result of evil supernatural influences. But whereas serious accidents are attributed to the spirit mother and therefore to the negligence or stupidity of the stricken person, disease strikes people regardless of their activities. And though afflictions that have clear and obvious causes, as cuts or snake bites, are also thought to be the vengeance of the supernatural associated with the animals, disease is caused by sorcerers. All sorcerers are shamans who consciously wish to hurt their fellow men. The sorcerer causes disease by modeling a variety of objects and blowing smoke upon them to give them life. The evil objects, called *causi*, are then wafted off on the wind to wander through the air until they encounter some human. Invisible to ordinary people, they enter the body and cause illness. The particular illness depends upon the material out of which the *causi* was modeled and the shape given it by the sorcerer.

755 Two distinct processes are required for the proper cure of illness. First the *causi* 757 is extracted from the sick person's body by the shaman, and he then prescribes certain herbal remedies to repair the damage caused by it. The first part of the cure is uniform for all *causi*; the herbal remedy prescribed is, however, specific for the malady.

755 The process of extracting a *causi* is extremely simple. The sick person strips his 276 or her clothes from the part of the body where the pain is localized and sits or lies on the ground. The treatment most often takes place in the patient's dwelling but the shaman sometimes receives the ill in the men's house. After the patient is prepared, the shaman takes one of his large cigarettes, which are wrapped in a thin layer of the inner bark of the *tauari* tree, and commences to smoke. As he smokes he crouches over the sick person and intently stares at his body. The shaman does not inhale or swallow excessive amounts of smoke, and narcotic effects are specifically denied. Rather, the smoke heightens his extra-visual ability

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vine in hot water and applying the mixture to the stomach. The other consists of 153
the trunks of very young bariti palms crushed in water. Part of this mixture is 755
drunk, and the rest is applied externally to the torso of the sick person. 757

8. *Od pipi*, or intestinal pain, is caused by the same *causa* as *igas pipi*, or stomach-ache. However, the term *od pipi* is in reality reserved for dysentery, for it is always accompanied by severe diarrhea. The medicines used for stomach pains are considered effective in the relief of intestinal pains also, but two additional cold remedies are used as specifics for the diarrhea. The roots of a certain shrub are boiled in water, part of which is taken internally and the rest allowed to steam below the hammock. The leaves of this shrub are also applied to the abdomen as a poultice. The same use is made of the leaves of the *mariri pipi*, a water plant. The local Brazilians also boil the leaves of this plant and place the steaming pot below the hammock of a bewitched person. The vapors are believed to cause an evil object to fall out of the victim's body. 757

9. *A pipi*, or headache, is treated by mixing *cavira de castanha* in water and applying the solution to the head. Unripe Brazil nuts are also grated into water and similarly applied. Both remedies are considered cold. The nature of the *causa* that causes headache was not known by the informants interviewed.

10. The tenth and last ailment is a three-stage sickness generally known by the name applied to its first stage, called *ajwani*. In this primary phase, the afflicted man or woman becomes unhappy and listless and eats mud, soap, and other inedible substances. The symptoms increase in severity in the next stage, or *yaká*, and the victim becomes thin, yellow, and "bloodless." Finally, the patient passes into the state known as *tsachakat*, at the end of which he usually dies. During the final illness, the person's soul sometimes becomes one of the *divided* wandering souls. The symptoms are descriptive of the chronic forms of a number of illnesses, such as malaria, dysentery, and jaundice. The Mundurucu attribute it to a *causa* made of roasted earthworms rolled into a ball and spread in the air. No remedies were known. (261)

A person can be afflicted by more than one *causa* at a time, and the shaman often recommends a number of herbal preparations. The shaman does not himself administer these remedies, but instructs the kinemen of the sick person in their use. They then collect the proper herbs and apply them.

The techniques used by the Mundurucu shaman are so widely distributed throughout eastern South America that any attempt to trace their provenience would be overly lengthy. The shaman's use of tobacco smoke and the techniques of sucking and massage are almost universal in the Amazon area. Of equally wide distribution are the use of herbs and the various methods of applying them. Infusions, external applications, and steam baths are, as Lowie indicates,⁷ known among a number of tribes of the region. 756 171

One aspect of Mundurucu herbal medicine worthy of further discussion is the division of remedies into hot and cold categories. This distinction is made throughout most of Latin America with regard to both medicines and food. The Mun- 279 171

⁷ Lewis, 1948, pp. 51-52.

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are still believed to be in great danger. The stone cannot be touched; small ones can be plucked from the patient's body or from the ground with a piece of charred cotton, but large stones are allowed to enter the ground and are then safely driven into a fire with the tip of a bow.

The *gaship* and *weshaw* sent by the souls of the game animals or by their spirit mothers cannot be touched either, but they are not considered as dangerous as the stones of the *Ferepuri*. To extract these malignant objects, the shaman, working alone, blows smoke upon the patient and massages his body. He then picks the object out of the body with a wooden feather upon which he has blown tobacco smoke. No attempt is made to catch and destroy the object, for this would further anger the spirits of the game. These cures are usually only temporarily efficacious, and other *gaship* or *weshaw* frequently strike the victim anew after his cure.

In addition to their supernatural curing techniques, most shamans are quite skilled in the secular treatment of broken bones, dislocated muscles, and similar ills. On one occasion, my wife who is acute discomfort from a strained muscle in her back. The shaman instructed her to lie face downward across a hammock, and our interpreter was told to hold her legs while I maintained a firm grip on her shoulders. He then probed the musculature in the small of her back with his fingertips. Although she complained only of a generalized headache, he apparently believed that the source of the trouble was to be found in this area. When the shaman found the difficulty, he ordered the interpreter to pull on her left leg at his command. He then pressed gently but firmly into the musculature with his two thumbs and issued the order. The treatment was quite effective, for his patient's pain was relieved immediately.

The preceding account represents a fairly comprehensive description of Mundurucu maladies and their treatment. But a final affliction recognized by the Mundurucu can be classified neither as illness nor wound. The concept of *shikolen* is best translated as bad luck and is found widely distributed throughout the Amazon under the designation of *paucama*. *Shikolen* affects only men and becomes evident when a man hunts for several days without killing any game or prowls continually about the underbrush near the village without encountering a woman. So far as could be ascertained, bad luck is not caused by supernatural. It strikes only men who do not rub their bodies daily after bathing with the ground root of a species of forest vine. The fragrance of this root lingers about the person and is thought to attract game animals and women. To insure good luck fully in one's pursuits, it is also believed necessary occasionally to drink sufficient quantities of this root mixed in water to induce vomiting. Most men undergo this purification process once or twice a year.

SHAMANISM AND SPIRITS

Although Mundurucu shamans are not thought to control and use particular spirits, they are believed to be in intimate contact with the supernatural world. The shamans' souls are said to have the ability to travel to the afterworlds and to the underworld of the *Kökeriwut*, and they alone among the Mundurucu can

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see and speak to certain supernatural beings. This power is of great importance to Mandarucu society, for the economic well-being of the community is believed to depend upon the proper propitiation of the spirit mothers of the game. Annual ceremonies were formerly held for this purpose, and the shaman had an important role in these rites. But the shaman was also responsible for pleasing the mothers of the game by 'feeding' them throughout the year. The latter required only the co-operation of other shamans and was of short duration and limited participation. Today, say informants, the spirit mothers are no longer fed because of the lack of sufficiently strong shamans. The Mandarucus believe that hunting is correspondingly poorer than in the old days and life less abundant.

The occasions when he fed the *putcha ñ*, or mother of the game, constitute the only instances when the shaman went into a trance. A number of shamans were necessary for this performance. The strongest of them was usually selected to feed the *putcha ñ*, and he prepared himself by magically inserting the three instruments known as *sawák* into his body. One was placed in the back of the neck and two others in the back of either knee. The shaman then lay in his hammock in the men's house and was covered with a blanket of buriti palm leaves. The other shamans lit large cigarettes rolled in tamarí bark and, inserting the lighted ends in their mouths, blew dense clouds of tobacco smoke into the hammock. Fortified by the *sawák* in his body and intoxicated by the smoke, the shaman fell into an extraordinary state in which he was able to see the supernatural clearly. He then leaped out of the hammock, seized a bowl of *móri* (sweet manioc, gruel), and, led by his *borumbó*, another instrument, dashed off to feed the *putcha ñ*. He ran a short distance outside the village and there plunged into a hole in the ground which only he could see. He then traveled underground, shouting loudly in his passage, and emerged from another hole some distance beyond, from which point he continued his journey on the surface. The shaman visited the various manifestations of the *putcha ñ* and fed *móri* to all of them. He then selected the one that pleased him most and brought it back to one of the deep springs near his village, where its influence would attract game animals. The shaman returned to his village by the same route used on his outward journey. When he arrived back in the men's house, his waiting fellow shamans seized him and immediately extracted the three *sawák*, lest their power turn him into an animal. They then blew tobacco smoke on his body and washed and dried him, thus bringing him out of his dangerous state.

Only the strongest of shamans could feed the *putcha ñ* personally. Weaker ones sent their *sawák* out alone to call the *putcha ñ* together in the Land of the Game, and the shaman's wife went there to feed them. A shaman whose wife was pregnant could not travel under the ground, for the earth would close over him and trap him. One shaman related that this had once happened to a man, and the other shamans dug him out just in time.

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The shaman also has the power to 'manufacture' the mother of the peccary (*daje ñ*) and the mother of the tapir (*biu ñ*). The mother of the tapir is made by killing a pregnant tapir and extracting the fetus, which is brought back

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to the men's house rolled it heaven and then slowly roasted and dried out over a fire. Tobacco smoke is blown upon it, and sweet manioc broth is occasionally poured upon it to please its feet. The dried fetus is believed to become transformed in time into a baby tapir containing the mother of the tapir, and the shaman places it near one of the pools at the headwaters of the stream. Even weaker shamans can make the *hio hio*, and any pregnant tapir serves this purpose.

Although the manufacture of a *hio hio* was never witnessed during our residence among the Manderaca, I was able to observe the preparation of a mother of the pécary in the savanna village of Cabrad. On this day, the hunters had chased a band of pécary the had passed close to the village. The band, however, had a fair head start on the hunters and escaped, leaving a half-grown member behind. The dogs cornered the animal in a bush, and the hunters were about to capture it as a pet when the shaman arrived on the scene. He ordered the men and their dogs to stand back while he smoked intensely and concentrated his gaze upon the animal. He then announced that the young pécary was carrying the mother of the pécary, or *daje hio*, within its body. As the news spread, all the villagers came out to gaze upon the animal and to admire its "beauty," evidently seeking thereby to gratify its spirit. The shaman then grabbed the squealing pécary and sat upon it, while another shaman secured it by its snout. A third shaman pulled out the animal's eyelashes and some hair from its back and released it unharmed. The first shaman then brought the hairs back to the trumpet chamber adjoining the men's house and placed them inside the hollow limb of a burnt palm. Every day thereafter he blew smoke upon his creation and poured a sweet manioc drink over it. After a period of this treatment it was believed that the hairs would turn into a young pécary with the mother of the pécary inside it. The animal would similarly be carried to one of the deep pools in the neighborhood and would attract herds of pécary. Strong shamans, it was believed, could make the *daje hio* from the hairs of any pécary, but weaker practitioners, as in this instance, had to select an animal that already had a *daje hio* within it.

OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE SHAMAN

In addition to his curing activities and his role in the propitiation of the spirit mothers, the shaman performs a variety of lesser duties. When the village is moved to a new locale every ten years or so, the shaman must inspect the site selected. He ascertains if there are many fever-producing coqui in the neighborhood, and he looks also for signs of the *Torapari* and other malignant beings. These malevolent forces can also exist below the surface of the ground, and the shaman must send his *cawak* to inspect the earth below the proposed village site. After the instrument has completed its investigation, it returns to the shaman and tells him of its discoveries.

The shaman, through another of his instruments, the *chibit*, can also discover lost persons and lost or stolen objects. He blows smoke upon the *chibit*—a small piece of cane—and sends it upon its mission. In the case of a stolen object,* the

* Theft is extremely rare among the Manderaca and probably owes its occasional occurrence to the contemporary acquisition of trade goods.

756 instrument follows the chief's tracks and then comes back and reveals his identity
757 and location to the shaman. If the object is merely lost, the *chibit* searches for it
and then informs the shaman where it is to be found.

Hunters occasionally lose their way in the forest, and their relatives immediately resort to the shaman to find them. The shaman's instrument locates the lost person and then returns to tell the shaman whether he is alive and homeward bound on the proper trail. If the person is still wandering aimlessly, the *chibit* frequently snips him in the right direction or enters his body and leads him home. Only the shaman can hear the voice of the *chibit*; his dialogues with the instrument are inaudible to others.

758 One informant reported that in the old days the most powerful shamans of the tribe were able to turn people temporarily into animals. The Mundurucu in those times performed a ceremony called the *Daperip*, which took place over a three-year period. As a part of this ceremony, the three most powerful shamans participating allowed their hair to grow to their shoulders and were believed able to turn the hunters, an insect, into the tapir and men into the tapir or deer. Nobody was able to see them perform these acts; the transformed men simply disappeared. It was considered extremely dangerous to be thus selected by these powerful shamans, because the men, in the guise of tapir and deer, were frequently chased by the dogs and could be killed. However, the shamans recognized the slain animals as their own creations and proceeded to change them back to men. They took out the heart and blood, placing them on the ground and covering the pile with leaves, and then blew tobacco smoke upon it and stamped upon the ground; the man emerged from under the leaves alive and intact. It is said that men who had undergone this experience were considered especially sacrosanct because of their former membership in the animal world, and their presence was especially valued at the ceremonies connected with the animal spirits.

Shamans possessing the power to assume this special ceremonial role were always married to equally strong female shamans. These women were able to transform other women into animals during the *Daperip* ceremony and are said to have been capable of transforming a Brazil nut hawk with a length of vine made it into a cat.

759 Finally, some shamans engage in the practice of making a woman into a
760 wife, or waton. No respectable shaman would perform such an act, however,
852 and those who use their powers for such disreputable ends are called *mané*
759 *lawa*, or bad or foolish shamans. Reprehensible though this may be to the Mundurucu, the *mané lawa* is not to be classed with the *chikopat*, or sorcerer, who is believed to be a dire threat to society. He causes disease and death, whereas the *mané lawa* merely converts women into nymphomaniacs, a practice that is rather unbecomingly considered both disgraceful and highly amusing by the Mundurucu men.

The *waton* indiscriminately copulates with all men who desire her. Characteristically, she does not smile modestly in the presence of the men, but grins and laughs

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in a manner thought to be quite low and suggestive. The other women look upon the *papi* as a threat to their own marital happiness, but blame the men for her condition. Any sufficiently disreputable and irreverent shaman can make a *papi* of a woman whom he desires. But, unlike love magic in most societies, once he creates her he must be prepared to share her with others, for his magic makes her want any and all men.

To make a *papi* the shaman prepares a paste of curupa sap and urucú and mixes it thoroughly with the roasted and powdered body of the *uirapuri* bird. Smoke is blown upon the preparation and it is magically sent into the body of the unsuspecting woman. Another preparation is made with a piece of *uirapuri* meat, and a third is made by mixing brilliantine with either the brains of the *loo loo* bird or of the *matricaria* fish. The use of the *uirapuri* as a love charm or symbol is widespread in the Amazon region, especially among Tupian groups. The Mundurucu believe it to be an enchanted bird and explain that, as the other birds of the forest follow the *uirapuri*, so also will the men follow a woman who has been bewitched with a charm made from its body.

The *papi* is not physically damaged by the spell cast over her by the shaman. She appears happy and laughs constantly; her appetite for men is insatiable, but she enjoys herself thoroughly when in their company. However, her condition is viewed with disfavor by the other women, and she becomes marginal to female society. Also, she soon becomes the subject of widespread gossip and ridicule, both of which are unendurable to a Mundurucu. For these reasons, the *papi* generally goes to the shaman to be cured. He extracts the charm by the same techniques used to take out *caabi* and then recommends a preparation made of curupa sap and the resin of a tree near which a jaguar has slept or rolled about. The woman applies this preparation to her face and body until she feels that she has been completely cured. The remedy is considered to be effective in keeping men away as it partakes of the qualities of the jaguar, which is considered an ugly and repulsive animal by the Mundurucu. [525]

The treatment is not always effective. A young woman of the village of Cabral went to the shaman to be cured of her condition. During the following days a marked change was noted in her deportment. She smiled demurely behind her hand and no longer fixed the men with direct and inviting glances. But as the days passed, she returned slowly to her old ways and was soon meeting the men in the underbrush surrounding the village. When the shaman who had performed the cure was asked why she behaved in this manner, he shrugged and replied, "Sometimes the treatment works, and sometimes it does not."

SUMMARY

When his power is used for socially approved purposes, the shaman is accorded the respect due a major benefactor of the community. But his power can be used for evil ends, and witchcraft is invariably believed to emanate from shamans gone bad. The sorcerer or *chikapi* is thought by the Mundurucu to engage in his nefarious practices with conscious and deliberate intent. All shamans have

754 lived in different villages, but the sorcerer leaped the distance to his brother's village and stalked him in the forest. The married brother heard the approaching whistle of the jaguar and backtracked and lay in wait for it. When it appeared, he shot the creature in the head, the only vulnerable point in its body, and thus killed it. He then cut the jaguar's throat, thrust his hand into its body, and dragged out its liver. He mixed the liver with gunpowder and left it on the trail. After he returned home, a group of men from his brother's village arrived with the intent of killing him. The sorcerer, whose jaguar form had been slain, had returned to his village sick and had accused his brother of bewitching him. The brother explained that he had merely defended himself against his own brother, who was the real sorcerer. The assembled men believed him, and the guilty brother wasted away and died.

Cases of jaguar sorcery were extremely common among the Mandarucu. During our residence with them, one of the residents of the mission was suspected of making and spreading coqui and turning into a jaguar at night. It was further believed that he had created other jaguars that were constantly lurking behind his house. But the presence of the priests prevented the Mandarucu residing at the mission from killing the suspected man, and they merely avoided his person and his dwelling. Even the powerful shaman who lived in the mission village had resolved to move away rather than live near such a dangerous personality.

753 Although all disease is believed to be caused by witchcraft, a single occurrence of illness within a community does not generally provoke direct action against an accused sorcerer. When, however, sickness becomes rife within a village, and especially when deaths result, the responsible sorcerer is sought out and killed. 754 689 The practice of destroying a witch is resorted to only when the community is 756 faced by a major threat, and the inevitability of occasional illness is usually rationalized as owing to stray coqui. In spite of this inconsistency, the simple formula which attributes disease to witchcraft, and therefore calls for the death of the sorcerer, cannot be more rigorously applied if shamanism is to continue. Even under this modified application of the rule, the shaman's position is most precarious. One or two shamans are executed as sorcerers during an average year, and their numbers are steadily dwindling. Those shamans who are fortunate enough to escape execution are visibly insecure, especially when the rainy season reunites people in their villages and the annual cycle of colds and epidemic diseases begin.

756 This constant fear induces many shamans to leave their villages and to migrate to the vicinity of the Brazilian population. As an example, there were three 754 shamans in the village of Cabruá, one of whom rarely practiced for fear of accusation. He had been suspected of sorcery once before and had escaped retribution only because of membership in the strong family of the chief. The numerical strength and influence of his family was, however, his only protection from execution, for one need not actively practice shamanism to be accused of sorcery. The possession of the latent hereditary power of the shaman suffices

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to establish eligibility for suspicion. Both of the two active shamans had resolved to move away from Cabaú and to dwell in the isolation of their rubber avensien. But neither would admit to fear of being accused of sorcery. One claimed that he wished to reside with his own kin although he was already living, as is considered proper, with his wife's relatives in Cabaú. The other said that he would find food more abundant at his rubber avensien locale. Such minor subterfuges are common among the Mundurucu when queried on an unpleasant personal subject. In reality, both shamans knew that several years had passed since the last sorcery execution in Cabaú, and neither wished to be present for the next. Also, as soon as one had made the decision to leave, the other had no choice but to follow. To be the only available suspect in the village was not a very promising prospect.

The men of a village afflicted with a great deal of illness usually seek out the most powerful shaman available and request that he not only attempt to cure the sick, but destroy the *caúli* that infect the village. He is also expected to use his great powers to detect and name the responsible sorcerer. Shamans are said to be capable of discovering and naming sorcerers at any time, but they do so only when requested by the villagers after a particularly severe epidemic or after a death from disease. Informed of the culprit, who is almost always a fellow villager, the men collectively decide to dispose of him and delegate the task to two or three of their number. But, as will be shown subsequently, such unanimity of communal decision is the ideal situation; sorcery killings are frequently stormy affairs among the contemporary Mundurucu.

Only a few Mundurucu shamans are considered to be powerful enough to destroy the *caúli* in a village and unerringly point out their creator, and it is, therefore, usually necessary to invite one from outside the community. After he has treated the sick, the visiting shaman proceeds to destroy the *caúli* and other malignant spirits within the village. He first builds a small thatch hut, no larger than necessary to contain him and his instruments, and retreats to it for the day. His first act is to lean his five *pítponchap* (spears), the previously described dagger-shaped instruments, against a piece of wood laid upon the floor of the hut. Next he places an ordinary steel lock in line with the *pítponchap*. The lock is considered to be the most effective of all these instruments owing to the *caúli's* fear of metal, and it is referred to as the leader of the others. The shaman then blows smoke twice on the *pítponchap*, and they suddenly come to life and move from their leaning position to balance perfectly across the piece of wood. He blows smoke on them a third time, and the instruments then stand in a vertical position, their sharp points directed upward. Thus animated, the lock addresses the other instruments to suggest that they attack the shaman in order to test his strength. At this juncture the shaman says, "No. I only assembled you to kill *caúli*, *Iwaperi*, and any other evil thing that you can find. But be careful not to harm anything that belongs to the game animals." He then dips the piece of wood upon which the lock has been lying and sends it through the thatch into the open air. The five *pítponchap* immediately fly after

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is and spend the day spearing malignant spirits and objects. At nightfall, they
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return to the shaman's hut, their points covered with the blood of these beings,
and the practitioner asks them what variety of supernatural they had destroyed
and how many of each there were.

After he has rid the village of the evils inhabiting it, the shaman divulges the
name of the sorcerer, if he believes the situation to be sufficiently serious. The
accused shaman is usually killed from ambush outside his village, although some
are dispatched by direct assault within its confines. Since the sorcerer's soul is
believed to be dangerous even after death, another shaman must extract and
destroy it immediately after the execution. This is done by brushing it from its
position in the back to the top of the head with a motion feather. When the soul
emerges from the head, it is caught in a hollow bamboo tube and cast into a fire.

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Most studies of the subject conclude that sorcery executions are conducive to
social cohesion, since they constitute a mechanism for the externalization of
aggression and release of tension in a socially approved way, and also because
they constitute a mechanism of social control. The Mandaraca data tend partly
to substantiate this thesis, for sorcery executions are the only occasions on which
intrasocietal violence is sanctioned. Interpersonal tensions are rife among the
Mandaraca, but during our research no Mandaraca was ever heard to raise
his voice against another, and the occurrence of overt violence between men
was specifically denied by informants. The social structure demanded complete
harmony and cooperation; the latent and suppressed aggressions inevitable in
such a situation were projected into the person of the sorcerer, and his execution
was cathartic for the community. It will be shown, however, that the changing
nature of this community has caused sorcery to be involved in its progressive
and ongoing fusion.

In spite of the fact that sorcery was a perilous practice, resort to black magic
served as a covert expression of generalized hostility for the shaman, as well.
Although it is impossible to induce any Mandaraca to admit witchcraft, I am
inclined to believe that it is actively practiced. The techniques by which evils
are manufactured and propagated are well known to all shamans, and some
informants claimed that sorcerers have revealed their activities to them, as in
the case described above. There is no doubt that many, if not most, accused
shamans are entirely innocent of the charges; but this, of course, does not alter
the function of sorcerer execution as an expressive valve for repressed aggression
and hostility within the society.

Aside from the suspicions, fear, and personal insecurity engendered by belief
in witchery among prospective victims and shamans alike, the execution of
sorcerers is frequently a source of factionalism within the society. During our
residence in the village of Misalo Velha, the community was split by an impending
sorcery execution. Two years earlier, a powerful shaman had been called to the
village to destroy the malignant objects believed to have caused an outbreak of

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ready been mentioned that depopulation, the disintegration of the social structure, and the decline of such highly valued activities as warfare and the hunt have robbed the Mundurucu of much that was vital and positive in their way of life and left them disoriented and apathetic. Frustration, in the classic paradigm, normally leads to aggression, the expression of which is forbidden in this culture. Fear of sorcery among the Mundurucu is a means of embodying and phrasing in understandable terms not only the manifold anxieties of their existence but the latent aggression that nearly all members of the society carry within them. In this connection, it will be remembered that the intrusive objects made by the sorcerer are spread abroad and are not usually directed against any one person. The sorcerer is then, as the Mundurucu say, malevolent toward society in general. This is not only logically consistent with the indiscriminate ravages of epidemic disease, but it also suggests that the sorcerer of the sorcerer displaces generalized aggression to his person and eradicates it through his execution.

That considerable aggression is unleashed upon the executed sorcerer can be inferred from the quality of the executions and the way in which informants report them. Many, if not most, executions take place from ambush, but some are bloody affairs in which the accused is beaten to death with clubs. And the Mundurucu enthusiastically relate these episodes with obvious hatred for the victim. The men of the village of Cabral derived evident satisfaction by pointing to a brown smear on the posts of their men's house and saying: "That is where we wiped the blood of our last sorcerer from our hands." This emotional intensity parallels that reported by Kluckhohn among the Navaho,¹ and among both peoples this is typical behavior.

Since aggression is related not only to real interpersonal differences but to frustration and general insecurity, it should be expected that witchcraft accusations would be most common in periods of stress. This is borne out by the Mundurucu practice of refraining from direct action against the sorcerer until illness becomes severe in the community and deaths occur. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient historical material to demonstrate conclusively, as did Kluckhohn, that sorcery troubles are correlated with historical periods of crisis. The best primary source on the Mundurucu, the report of the Brazilian engineer Antonio Tocantins, in 1875, describes sorcery executions as extremely frequent and one of the major problems of the Bacabal mission.² But it is difficult to evaluate the significance of this data and to control all the variables in the situation without similarly complete reports from other periods. In 1875 the Mundurucu still waged war and therefore had available a means of expression of hostility which had the obvious advantage of being directed outside the society. But on the other hand, Mundurucu society was then being subjected to its greatest threat since the contact with the whites, for these were the first years of the rubber-extraction period, and the Indians themselves were becoming increasingly involved in the industry. White rubber tappers were penetrating the area in growing numbers, and the mission had just been established. In

¹ Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 28.

² Tocantins, 1877, pp. 107-111.

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view of the complexity of the problem and the paucity of data, however, it can only be concluded that sorcery was also common in times past. Whether or not accusations and exorcisms have increased in number or in proportion to the number of shamans cannot be positively ascertained, but it is highly significant that the institution has been perpetuated into the present, a period that has seen the disappearance of much of Mandurucu religious activity.

It has been said that the shaman occupies a most precarious role today. The source of much of the evil threatening the group, he also is the only person who can cope with the harmful forces, and his services are in great demand. The Mandurucu are deeply concerned with illness and frequently sought relief in the medicine afforded by my wife and me and by the mission and Indian Service Post. But given their theory of illness, modern medicines were inadequate for a complete cure and were believed efficacious only in healing the damage done by supernatural agencies. The removal and destruction of the latter can only be accomplished by the shaman. The role thus has a dual function; society purges itself of repressed hostility through the imputation of malice to the shaman, and it is also the means by which society protects itself from the believed evil.

This dual function makes shamanism a most ambivalent practice. All but the most powerful practitioners, who usually are called upon to detect sorcerers, are in great and continued danger. The general collection of the Mandurucu population has proportionately thinned the ranks of the shaman, and exorcisms have further reduced their numbers. Many leave the Mandurucu country in flight from execution parties or in fear of future accusation. Others refuse to practice shamanism in the hope, often vain, that they will thus shield themselves from suspicion. The result is that many villages are without shamans, and their residents accordingly lose another motive for remaining members of isolated communities.

The involvement of sorcery in repressed conflict may be seen through an examination of a few case histories. The instance already cited in which the village of Minda Velha split on whether to kill the accused Antonio is a case in point. Antonio was the most industrious rubber tapper of the village and was much disliked by the family of the chief. The latter group was, as in most Mandurucu villages, the strongest aggregation of kinsmen in the community, since it included not only the sons-in-law of the chief, but also his sons, who are customarily exempt from the matrilineal residence rule. Relations were strained between the chief's group and the men of many other households of the village, for the latter looked upon the chief as the appointee of the missionaries and resented the strength of his family. These dissidents sided with the condemned shaman. They were not, however, willing to court the possibility of open factional struggle by offering physical defense of Antonio, but resolved instead to leave the village.

Another case of sorcery, this time in the savannah village of Cabruá, saw the men of the village determined to kill the stepson of the chief. The latter, supported by his sons and sons-in-law, intervened, and the man's life was spared. In a

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third village, however, the power of the chief's family must have been weak, for both he and his son were slain as sorcerers by the other men of the village. The tendency for villages to fracture because of sorcery fears and accusations is probably greater now than in the past. Not only is village cohesion in general much weaker, but the disappearance of such leadership activities as leading war parties and trading on behalf of the village as a whole has made it most difficult for the chief to obtain the consensus necessary to carrying out an execution. It must not be thought, however, that lack of unanimity in sorcerer killings indicates a decline in belief in black magic; it rather reflects distrust of the sincerity of the accusers and the existence of latent factionalism that may not be directly caused by witchcraft. But these occasions bring conflicts to a head and open breaches that are in many cases irremediable and can be removed only by the removal of one party.

This analysis of the Mundurucu data indicates that although the institution of sorcery may be viewed in one light as socially integrative, so far as it acts as a cathartic for aggression, it may also be most disruptive of social cohesion, for it often aggravates tensions.¹⁸² It would seem that shamanism and sorcery have become complementary to the central direction of social and economic change.¹⁵² The ecological accommodation to increased participation in rubber production calls for the dispersal of the population into ever smaller units in the vicinity of the stands of wild rubber trees. Correspondingly, sorcery conflicts tend to disintegrate larger village units while being integrative for factions within the village, which then commonly establish themselves as small local groups.¹⁵⁴ This is not the only means by which social fission occurs. Latent conflicts that do not involve sorcery sometimes cause families and factions to leave villages; others leave because of the economic expediency of residence near their rubber avenues.⁵¹⁸ But sorcery remains as a contributing motivation for the participants in the process. The Mundurucu example thus suggests that the institution of sorcery may promote the cohesion of a society as a whole, but only where other bases for such cohesion exist.

The close relationship of religion to the social structure can be seen quite as clearly in the context of change as in a synchronic dimension. As the society has become progressively divested of those mechanisms that integrated tribe and village, so also have group religious activities fallen into abeyance. What remains are the essentially individual practices of shamanism and sorcery. This is the same process noted for other parts of South America by Steward, and which he has phrased as part of a change in "level of sociocultural integration."¹⁸² But beyond the scope of participation in religious activity we have seen another selective factor determining which segments of religion will persist. This, in brief, is the simple question of whether the element serves some social function in the changed setting. By this criterion, the warfare ceremonies have totally disappeared, and the ceremonies for the animal spirits have declined with the shift of a large part of the population from hunting to fishing. Similarly, the

* Kluckhohn (1944, p. 71) has noted the presence of disruptive elements in Navaho witchcraft also, although the analysis of these tendencies were beyond the scope of his treatise.

¹ Steward, 1931.

KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

614 expected to show warmth, support, and hospitality to each other, they are "brothers" and are expected to act accordingly. These obligations are discharged when a Mundurucu is called upon to do so. He seldom meets more than a few of his clan fellows in the course of everyday life, however, and the opportunity for the exercise of expected behavior toward any large number of fellow clansmen rarely arises. This follows from the results of matrilocality and also from the contemporary rarity of gatherings involving people of several villages. The latter factor is of [619] some importance, for multivillage participation in warfare and ceremony was the distinguishing feature of Mundurucu tribal integration in times past.

611 The patrilineal principle of descent has contemporary
622 significance beyond the inheritance of clan membership. Chieftaincy is ideally transmitted in the male line; the eldest son of the chief is considered the appropriate heir, but the office may also be passed to a brother or a younger son. In order to accommodate patrilineal inheritance to the continuity of village leadership, the sons of village chiefs are generally exempt from the matrilocal rule. Also, 611 shamanistic power is believed to be inherent in certain
756 people from birth and is inherited only through the father. Whole family lines are recognized as shamans, whether or not they actually practice the art.

428 Shamanism and chieftaincy are the only important in-
768 heritable offices. All portable personal property is destroyed on the death of the owner. Houses, which are abandoned every ten years, are not inherited, and there is no private or group property in land.

MARRIAGE

584 Entry into a marital compact is an extremely simple affair among the Mundurucu. A young man in search of a mate

THE LOCAL GROUP

593 when he desires, he goes off to other villages in search of
 [584] a mate. He will find the new men's houses in which he will
 stay to be organized along the same lines as the one in
 which he had been incorporated. And just as his strongest
 ties during adolescent years were to his age mates and the
 [582] occupants of the men's house, so also will he find his pri-
 mary association to be with the men of the village, as a
 whole.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

592 Patrilineal descent and matrilineal residence without vil-
 621 lage endogamy give the Mundurucu an unusual social
 structure. This is also manifest in the realm of political or-
 ganization. The oldest man of each household is nominally
 considered to be its leader, but I never saw the "leader"
 intervene in the over-all direction of women's activities,
 except to inform them when a consignment of farinha was
 promised to a trader. The actual direction of household
 activities is generally in the hands of its oldest woman,
 commonly the wife of the leader. The female director of
 the household exerts considerable influence over the other
 women because of her age and her senior status under
 ideally matrilineal conditions as older sister, mother, and
 grandmother to them. Her husband is respected by the
 members of the household, and by the rest of the people
 of the village, but he is peripheral to its main activities.

554 House leaders, as all older men, usually occupy high
 621 positions on the village prestige scale. Shamans are ac-
 • [756] corded considerable standing, and any man who is serious
 in demeanor and possesses a large store of traditional
 knowledge is well regarded. The highest position in the
 622 village, however, is that of the chief. Considerable con-
 554 fusion surrounds the contemporary status of chieftainship
 because of historical changes in methods of selection and

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Few techniques for pleasing these animal spirits are now practiced, but in former times there were many. Powerful shamans, of whom there are now said to be but few, used to travel magically to the "Land of the Game" to "feed" the animal spirits, and the two most important ceremonies also had this purpose. These two rites, called the *Araiarai* and the *Dajearuparip* were held, as all Mundurucu ceremonials, during the rainy season, and were almost identical but for duration; the former was said to have occupied almost the whole rainy season, while the latter lasted ten days. In both, the game animals were honored and their spirit protectors summoned and offered a food particularly pleasing to them. Annual observance was not mandatory, but either the long or the short festival was usually held every year. Villages usually rotated the duty of staging the rite, and the residents of several communities were invited. A number of powerful shamans were a prerequisite to the ceremony and had to be recruited from many villages, for only they could ward off the attacks of evil spirits that were attracted by the ritual food offerings.

Other ceremonies were also held to celebrate the trophy heads taken during war. These rites lapsed, of course, with the end of headhunting in 1912. The game-animal ceremonies persisted into relatively recent times, however. The last *Araiarai* was held in the early 1930's, and the shorter *Dajearuparip* lasted until about 1945. The Mundurucu explain the lapse of the ceremonial cycle as caused by the contemporary lack of powerful shamans. There is some merit in this view, for sorcery executions, the migration to the Cururú River, and general loss of population have greatly lowered the number of shamans available in the savannah villages. Also, the Mundurucu look upon themselves as being in a degenerated state; they feel that their

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82 women are no longer as desirable as in the good old days,
 776 nor are men as brave and strong. Correspondingly, the
 [759] shamans are thought to have lost much of their power and
 knowledge. Besides, there are significant social and economic reasons for the lapse of the ceremonies. The larger ceremony fell into abeyance after the migration to the Cururú River had gained full force, and the shorter form was terminated after the exodus had reduced the savannah population to its present 300. Significantly, the Dajearuparip ended in 1945, at the conclusion of the period of rising rubber prices in World War II and the concomitant growing preoccupation of the Mundurucú Indians with extraction of latex. Thus, there is not only an insufficient number of shamans at present, but there are not enough people left in the savannahs to stage a large-scale reunion.

[224] Furthermore, only the campineiros, a bare one-quarter of the total Mundurucú population, still depend on game as the principal source of protein; the others rely primarily
 [226] on fishing, and the ceremonies have correspondingly less economic significance to them. Finally, to the degree that the old social system has weakened, so also has this positive, affirmative aspect of the religion. The rites were vital to tribal unity and male activity and were a function of them. The decay of intervillage cooperation in other spheres and the inevitability of eventual abandonment of residence on the savannahs make the Mundurucú apathetic to the continuity of the group-based and group-affirmative rituals—actually, those aspects of relations with the supernatural that Emile Durkheim defined as "religion." * The people still believe in the game-animal spirits and still give credence to the efficacy of the ceremonial means of propitiating them. But the failure to translate the
 [269] beliefs into the realm of action has robbed them of im-

* Durkheim, 1947.

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mediate reality and caused their transmission to the young to become attenuated. 182 796 864

Shamanism and the corollary belief in sorcery have had, however, remarkable persistence among the Mundurucú. This continuity is not, perhaps, so unusual when one considers that similar practices may be found among the rural Amazonian population and even among the lower classes in north Brazilian cities. The Mundurucú shaman is believed to be endowed at birth with special supernatural powers inherited from his father. He usually receives tutelage in the art from his elders, but even if he is uninstructed and never engages in actual practice, he is still considered a shaman and capable of special relations with the supernatural. 756 [754] 428

The shaman's major task is the cure of disease and injury. Formerly he also had ceremonial roles, but these are largely defunct today. Disease is thought to be caused by intrusive objects made and spread by sorcerers, and the shaman extracts them by the technique, widespread in South America, of blowing tobacco smoke on the patient and removing the malignant object by suction or rubbing. There are generally one or two shamans, but seldom more, in savannah villages. 75

The skills of the shamans are in constant demand, and great dependence is placed on them. But despite the high prestige that they are accorded, their position is ambivalent. Although only shamans can cure disease, only they also have the supernatural power of disease-causing witchcraft, and a sorcerer is believed to be a shaman "gone bad." Shamans are generally not thought to practice sorcery with limited ends and against particular persons. Their magic can be used to inflict harm on individuals, but they are more commonly believed to spread malignant objects that attack and sicken people indiscriminately. The 754

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monly entangled in sorcery cases, either as accused or ac-⁶⁸³
cusers, reflects the strains in the political system. Reduced ⁷⁵⁴
village size contributes to the disruptive effects of sorcery
accusations, for even if a man has only a few defenders,
this may constitute a significant bloc within the commu-
nity under current circumstances.

One result of witch killings has been a decrease in the
number of shamans. This not only includes people who
were actually executed, but also those who escaped or ⁶⁸³
who left for fear of future accusation. Given the inevita- ⁷⁵⁴
bility of disease and death and the Mundurucú belief that ⁷⁵⁶
sorcerers are the responsible agents, the position of the
shamans is very insecure. There had been no sorcery kill-
ings in Cabruá for several years, as of the time of our stay,
but illnesses and deaths had occurred. The step son of the
chief was being effectively protected by his family, leaving
two other shamans open to accusation. One decided to
move to his rubber-avenue home on the Tropas River, and
the other immediately followed suit rather than be faced
with the unhappy prospect of being the only available
scapegoat. Cabruá was then left without a practicing
shaman, and the community was deprived of one of the
services that village life traditionally afforded.

Changes in Mundurucú religion show a close relation-¹⁸²
ship to economic and social shifts. Aspects of belief and ⁷⁷¹
practice that promoted and affirmed the well-being and
values of the society at large and which were best staged
by a unified social group have disappeared. What remains
are essentially practices that are defensive against prevail-
ing fears and anxieties and which are highly individualistic
in practice. A circular process is at work here. The decline ¹⁸²
of group ceremonial not only reflects the weakening of ⁶²⁸
Mundurucú social structure, but it has aided in its de- ⁷⁹⁶
bilitation. Fellow clan members are no longer united by

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622 ironical in their replies to the question of how José
 554 achieved his present status. Typical answers were, "Ask
 182 the priests," or, "Only José knows."

554 This ill-concealed resentment toward José is less in-
 578 dicative of personal animosity than of hostility toward his
 622 family and the mission, which José is considered to rep-
 797 resent. Mission policy is obviously to recognize as chiefs
 persons of some prestige who are friendly toward the
 priests and Christianity and who can be depended upon
 to make known the priests' wishes and urge acceptance of
 them. As for José, this policy entails favoritism toward him
 and his family, which his sons and sons-in-law and their
 wives reciprocate by currying favor with the priests and
 bearing stories of the peccadilloes of the villagers. The
 people are well aware of José's status as an instrument of
 the mission and, for this reason, do not recognize him as a
 true chief. This hostility toward José and his followers
 causes, in part, the factionalism to be discussed later.

The priests, despite their policy of recognizing certain
 men as chiefs, generally bypass them and deal with the
 people individually in matters of trade, religion, and fam-
 ily. The net result is to relieve a source of potential conflict
 by making it unnecessary for the chief to intervene on be-
 half of the mission in individual cases, as opposed to gen-
 eral support of mission policy. But the importance of the
 chieftaincy in its role as intermediary with the mission,
 which is its only function, is thereby diminished. In pass-
 ing, it should be noted that in some upstream villages,
 where mission influence is weaker than in Missão Velha,
 there are no formally recognized chiefs.

- 756 Shamanism is the only element of the native religion
 [758] that is still practiced on the Cururú. Although the Indians
 [753] seek medical aid at the mission and the Indian post, this
 has not made serious inroads on the art of the shaman, for

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all Mundurucú still believe firmly in the supernatural caus-⁷⁵⁶
 ation of illness. Thus, the drugs of the white man are con-^[753]
 sidered efficacious in the repair of the damage caused by
 the sorcerer's evil objects, but this in no way circumvents
 the necessity for the shaman to extract them. A corollary
 of the continued belief in native explanations of disease is
 the persistence of accusations of sorcery and the occasional ^[754]
 killing of witches.

The only shaman in recent practice in Missão Velha ⁷⁵⁴
 was executed as a sorcerer in 1950. It is now necessary to ⁷⁵⁶
 call a shaman from another village or to bring the sick
 person to him. The lack of an actively practicing shaman
 has not prevented another case of sorcery from arising in
 the village, for the accused in this instance was a shaman
 by descent. The case will be described in some detail, for
 it illustrates how political factionalism, sorcery, and gen-
 eral disaffection have combined as fission elements in the
 loosely integrated Cururú River villages.

Several months before we stayed in Missão Velha, a ¹⁵⁹
 great deal of illness caused the chief's son-in-law and sons ⁷⁵⁴
 to seek the services of Pedro, the most renowned of all ⁷⁵⁶
 Mundurucú shamans and a resident of the mission. Pedro, ⁵⁷⁸
 without the knowledge of the priests, of course, went to
 Missão Velha and performed the necessary acts to destroy
 all evil objects in the vicinity of the village. He then in-
 formed the others that the man responsible was one An-
 tonio, a resident of Missão Velha whose father was a
 shaman, although he himself never practiced. The chief
 wanted no trouble and planned for a time to move away
 from the supposedly malignant Antonio, but the younger
 men of his family were determined to kill the sorcerer.
 Certain other men of the village, however, were not fully
 convinced of Antonio's guilt and opposed his condemna-
 tion. Their doubts were not a reflection of skepticism in

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159 supernatural belief, but arose from hostility to the chief's
578 group, Antonio's most persistent persecutors. The fact that
754 they would also doubt the accuracy and integrity of the
756 most powerful shaman in the tribe is indicative of the intensity of this animosity. Some of the men opposed to the execution felt, on the other hand, that Antonio was in all probability guilty, but expressed revulsion at the idea of more bloodshed and would have rather preferred to let him depart in peace. In any event, no unanimous community action could be taken.

The split in the village was exactly along the lines of the two village political factions. Favoring the execution of Antonio were the chief, his two sons, his two sons-in-law, and the brother and brother-in-law of one son-in-law. The opposition consisted of the brother-in-law and former co-resident of a shaman killed at Missão Velha two years earlier, the brother-in-law and house mate of the accused Antonio, and a household whose men were related affinally to the chief's group. The position of the latter house in the dispute is of particular interest, for it included the brother-in-law, brother, and nephew of that son-in-law of the chief who was the moving spirit of the other faction. The people of this household had originally moved to Missão Velha to be near the latter kinsman.

The dilemma was finally resolved when the frightened Antonio decided to move completely out of the Mundurucú country to the relative safety of the Tapajós River. Those who defended him, however, were completely alienated from the village, and all had made plans to move. The man whose brother-in-law was killed two years ago was ready to settle permanently near his rubber avenue, the brother-in-law of the accused contemplated his departure, and the members of the third household wanted to move farther upstream. We left Missão Velha before the shifts

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occurred. If all the planned moves took place, however, the net loss to the village would be 36 out of 90 people, the residents of three of the ten occupied houses. As a footnote to this episode, Antonio fled shortly after our departure, but he made the fatal error of settling in a Mundurucú hamlet on the lower Cururú River. His reputation was, of course, widely known, and he was slain by his new fellow-villagers. 159
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To our knowledge the dispute never flared into an open display of aggression. On a few occasions the accused man was seen to talk to one of the men who wished to kill him and, more rarely, there was mutual visiting. Hostility between Mundurucú is generally more open on the Cururú than in the savannahs, but violence is still suppressed. Here, too, the only escape valve consists in killing suspected sorcerers; otherwise, one may move away from the object of hostility. The latter is easily done in the socio-economic framework of the Cururú settlements, for interpersonal and interfamilial dependence is low, and individuals have correspondingly greater mobility than on the savannahs.

Although no personal violence attends these disputes, the facts of conflict and withdrawal are socially disruptive beyond their effects on village membership. In the above-described conflict, two brothers were ranged in opposite factions, because one had chosen to follow the stand in defense of the accused taken by the oldest member of his household. And the position of the latter placed him in conflict with one of his wife's brothers, who favored killing Antonio. An even more interesting split occurred in a household whose inhabitants were absent from the village during my research. The oldest man and head of the house wished to avoid strife by taking no action against the condemned man, but his son, who resided with the father, was

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578 a leader in the movement for execution. Although many of
754 these bonds were probably not permanently fractured by
756 the dispute, they were all certainly placed under strain.

● The fact that first-degree kinsmen, not to mention clan fellows, can become embroiled in internecine strife that can result in the withdrawal of one of the parties is indicative of the progressive weakening of kin bonds. The ethic of harmony and nonviolence that was associated with the traditional institutions of descent and residence continues to some extent on the Cururú River, but it does not prevent social disruption.

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571 Another noteworthy contrast between Missão Velha and
[592] the savannah villages is the lower level of social interaction in the former. It has been pointed out that the household, most often a nuclear family, is the basic economic unit of the Cururú River Mundurucú. The same applies to everyday social intercourse, for not only are the men's house and the all-village collective female labor of the savannah farinha shed absent, but visiting between houses is also less frequent. After the day's labors, the husband, wife, and children usually sit around their own fire to eat and talk, and afterward retire to their hammocks. Occasionally a neighbor and his family will visit briefly. Visiting is almost
[574] always done in groups with two or three families coming together at one time. The all-male or all-female gatherings of the savannahs which have for their respective nuclei the men's house and the farinha shed are absent.

DISINTEGRATION OF THE CURURÚ VILLAGES

182 The conflict over sorcery in Missão Velha is typical of the
578 schisms constantly arising in the Cururú villages and which account, in part, for the fact that the average village population is on the decline with a corresponding increase in the number of villages. In addition, many people are

439 the chieftaincy, it is common practice to select one or two possible heirs and
 622 rear them in his household; this is what happened to Biboi. This is agreeable
 to the chief, for he gains the favor of the trader and, with it, preferential
 treatment in sales and purchases. It is clearly beneficial to the trader, as
 he hopes thereby to install a chief who will be responsive to his wishes, even
 at the expense of the Mundurucu villagers.]

The contemporary Mundurucu chief is in a dilemma. If we look upon a
 boundary role as one in which both ends have to be played against the middle,
 we see the chief caught between the interests of the trader and those of his
 followers; these interests rarely coincide. It is a difficult position, but
 one that can be maintained by maximal adherence to the traditional behavior
 expected of chiefs and minimal acquiescence to the demands of the traders.
 Biboi's father, Caetano, played a comparatively successful role. If the trader
 told him that the villagers were heavily in debt to him, Caetano would commu-
 nicate this fact and suggest that it would be well to collect more rubber; he
 never attempted even verbal coercion. He also sincerely sought to obtain the
 maximum return for his people.

622 Caetano embodied many characteristics of the traditional chief. An older
 man, he carried himself with a modest and unassuming dignity. He guided, per-
 suaded and cajoled, but he carefully refrained from ordering people, and all
 decisions of communal significance were made in consultation with the mature
 men of the village. Beyond this, Caetano knew Mundurucu traditional knowledge
 and lore and attempted to perpetuate it.

622 Biboi's position was very different from that of his father, for he was
 177 the prototype of the Indian boy who had been "educated" by a trader and later
 installed as a chief. He had no legitimate claim to the position, and it was
 necessary for the trader to insist that he would recognize only Biboi in deal-
 ings with Cabitutu. The residents grudgingly assented, but they regarded him
 as chief only in trade relations. The most influential man of the village was,
 in reality, a renowned shaman who was the son of the last chief and was con-
 sidered the legitimate heir to the office.

622 Biboi's precarious situation was made worse by the fact that he was under
 554 thirty years old and the junior of many men in the village. To complicate mat-
 ters, he had no supporting group of kinsmen in Cabitutu. Matrilocality, I have
 [59] said, is the normal mode of residence among the Mundurucu, but the sons of
 chiefs generally remain with their fathers after marriage. From the point of
 view of conscious motivation, the sons of chiefs remain patrilocal because their
 fathers are influential enough to persuade men to relinquish their daughters to
 them as a means of solidifying relations with them. By the same line of reason-
 ing, a young man who marries the daughter of a chief is willing to join a
 prestigious father-in-law. But from the point of view of social structure, the
 function of the patrilocality of the chief's family is twofold. By keeping the
 sons, the chief is able to transmit authority to them without the discontinuity
 that would result if they were resident in the villages of their wives. More-
 over, the chief is surrounded by a group of patrilineally related kin, a small
 and solidary patrilineage. His position is further enhanced by the fact that
 he has sons-in-law within the village. Much as this may reinforce his prestige,
 it does not enable him to exercise unilateral authority, for the rest of the